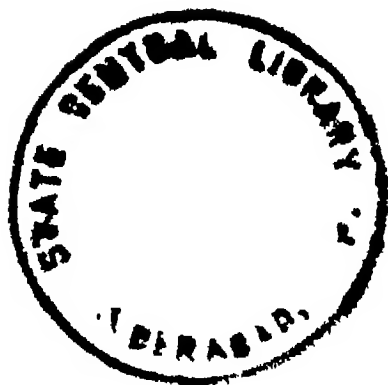




THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

XXXII :

(November 1926 - January 1927)



THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

April 1969 (Chaitra 1891)

© *Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad, 1969*

COPYRIGHT

By Kind Permission of Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad

PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR, THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION, NEW DELHI-1
AND PRINTED IN INDIA BY SHANTILAL HARJIVAN SHAH,
NAVAJIVAN PRESS, AHMEDABAD-14

PREFACE

The period—November 5, 1926 to January 20, 1927—covered by this volume was a relatively quiet one. There was a lull in political activity and Gandhiji, enjoying freedom from incessant touring and public speaking, could devote his time to things that concerned him more—spinning and khadi, anti-untouchability and anti-drink work, Hindu-Muslim unity and cow-protection—besides attending to the immense volume of letters that poured in from all quarters.

But most of all it was a period of inward searching and pondering over spiritual values. One such question that exercised Gandhiji's mind at this time was that of stray dogs. The issue, as he put it, was "whether in consonance with the principle of ahimsa, it may be a duty to kill certain dogs under certain circumstances when no other alternative is possible. I submit that it may be and I hold that there cannot be two opinions in the matter" (p. 42).

Apparently there were two opinions. Those who held more formal notions of non-violence wrote indignant letters. In the series of articles under the title "Is This Humanity?", begun in the preceding volume and concluded in this, Gandhiji answered the critics and provided a lucid exposition of the principle of ahimsa as he understood it. "All action," says Gandhiji, "is tainted inasmuch as it presupposes *himsa*. And yet we free ourselves from the bondage of action through action itself . . . And this *himsa* . . . must be the lowest minimum, must be rooted in compassion, must have discrimination, restraint, detachment at its back, and must lead us every moment onward to the path of ahimsa. . . . The religion of ahimsa consists in allowing others the maximum of convenience at the maximum of inconvenience to us, even at the risk of life. Everyone has to determine for himself the amount of inconvenience he is capable of putting up with. . . . Religion, even as the soul, is both one and many" (pp. 380-1).

Pride of place in this volume goes naturally to the "Discourses on the *Gita*", the finest fruit of his sabbatical year in the Ashram. An apt introduction to this informal masterpiece is provided by the critical account of Shrimad Rajchandra with which the volume opens. It was this friend who in 1893-94 helped Gandhiji to resolve his doubts about his mother-religion; assured him that no other religion has its "subtle and profound thought, its

34. LETTER TO FEROZE

November 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. There is no royal road to the control of passions. Constant endeavour and constant waiting upon God are the two things needed.

Yours sincerely,

FEROZE
V. CHAKWANO
P.O. PHALIA
(GUJRAT DISTRICT)
PUNJAB

From a microfilm: S.N. 19738

35. LETTER TO FELIX VALYE

November 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Pickthall¹ asks me for an article or a message for your magazine. I have not a moment to spare for writing an article. What message shall I send you save to say that my nationalism is intense internationalism? I am sick of the strife between nations or religions.

Yours sincerely,

DR. FELIX VALYE
HOTEL RICHMOND
GENEVA

From a photostat: S.N. 19739

¹ Marmaduke Pickthall, sometime editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*

